

In the Claims:

Cancel claims 1 through 13 and replace with the following claims 14 through 32.

--14. A depilatory composition in the form of an aqueous alkaline gel comprising:

- (i) a first polymeric binder comprising a charged cross-linked, water-soluble polymer;
- 5 (ii) a second polymeric binder comprising a linear water-soluble polymer;
- (iii) a depilatory agent; and
- (iv) a buffer system which maintains the pH of the composition at a value of from 10.5 to 13.0.--

--15. A depilatory composition according to claim 14 in which the first polymeric binder is present in an amount of from 0.1 to 3.0% w/w.--

--16. A depilatory composition according to claim 15 in which the cross-linked polymer is a cross-linked acrylic polymer, a cross-linked polyacrylamide or a copolymer of methyl vinyl ether and maleic anhydride cross-linked with dodecadiene.--

--17. A depilatory composition according to claim 14 in which the second polymeric binder is present in an amount of from 0.2 to 3.0% w/w.--

--18. A depilatory composition according to claim 17 in which the second polymeric binder comprises a linear non-

ionic polymer and/or a positively charged polymer and/or a negatively charged polymer.--

--19. A depilatory composition according to claim 17 in which the second polymeric binder comprises one or more of polyethylenimine, polyvinyl pyrrolidone, polyethylene oxide, polyethylene glycol, cellulose, hydroxy propyl cellulose, cetyl hydroxy ethyl cellulose, cetyl hydroxy propyl cellulose, starch, a polyglucoside, a polysaccharide, guar gum, carrageenan, a sclerotium gum, a polypeptide, and a copolymer of sodium acrylate or of hydroxy ethyl cellulose with dimethyl diallyl ammonium chloride.--

--20. A depilatory composition according to claim 14 in which the depilatory agent is potassium thioglycolate or thioglycerol.--

--21. A depilatory composition according to claim 20 which additionally comprises an accelerator for the degradation of keratin.--

--22. A depilatory composition according to claim 21 in which the accelerator is urea, thiourea, dithioerythritol, ethoxydiglycol or methylpropylidol.--

--23. A depilatory composition according to claim 14 in which the buffer system comprises a silicate, arginine, a nicotinate, polyethylenimine or a phosphate.--

--24. A depilatory composition according to claim 14 which has a yield point not more than 200 Pa.--

--25. A depilatory composition according to claim 14 in which the shear rate needed to decrease the viscosity of the gel by half is in the range of from  $10^{-2} \text{ s}^{-1}$  to  $200 \text{ s}^{-1}$ .--

--26. A depilatory composition according to claim 25 which the shear rate is from  $1 \text{ s}^{-1}$  to  $50 \text{ s}^{-1}$ .--

--27. A depilatory composition in the form of an aqueous alkaline gel comprising:

- (i) from 0.1% to 3.0% w/w of a first polymeric binder comprising a copolymer of methyl vinyl ether and maleic anhydride cross-linked with dodecadiene,
- (ii) from 0.2% to 3.0% w/w of a second polymeric binder comprising polyethylenimine, polyvinyl pyrrolidone and mixtures thereof,
- (iii) from 0.1% to 6.0% w/w of a depilatory agent comprising potassium thioglycolate, dipotassium thioglycolate and mixtures thereof,
- (iv) from 2.0% to 6.0% w/w of a buffer system comprising L-arginine, polyethylenimine or mixtures thereof.--

--28. A depilatory composition according to claim 27 which additionally comprises:

(v) from 5.0% to 10.0% w/w of an accelerator for the degradation of keratin.--

--29. A depilatory composition according to claim 28 in which the accelerator is urea.--

--30. A depilatory composition according to claim 27 in the form of a sprayable gel.--

--31. A process for producing a depilatory composition according to claim 27, which process comprises the steps of:

- 5 (i) forming a first premix by mixing water and the first polymeric binder,
- (ii) forming a second premix by mixing water, the buffer system and the second polymeric binder,
- (iii) adding the depilatory agent to the second premix with stirring to obtain a mixture,
- 10 (iv) adding the first premix to the mixture with stirring, and
- (v) adjusting the pH to between 10.5 and 13.0.--

--32. A process for producing a depilatory composition according to claim 28, which process comprises:

- (i) forming a first premix by mixing water and the first polymeric binder,
- 5 (ii) forming a second premix by mixing water, the buffer system and the second polymeric binder,